

Arms Control Proposal

NIC# 01712-88
11 May 1988

Distribution: C/NIC
VC/NIC
NIO/USSR
NIO/EUR
NIO/ECON
NIO/SP
SOVA/RIG
DIR/AG

25X1

SECRET

25X1

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC# 01712-88
11 May 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

FROM: MG Larry D. Budge, USA
National Intelligence Officer
for General Purpose Forces

SUBJECT: Possible SNIE: Likelihood and Implications of a Soviet
Conventional Arms Control "Breakout" [redacted]

25X1

1. Several convergent circumstances may have put the Soviets into a position where unilateral conventional arms reductions or deep cut proposals will serve their national interests and place the US in a reactive posture:

- ° The massive procurement of Soviet armaments from the early 1970s to the 1980s has provided a large modernized combined arms force.
- ° Retention of obsolescent arms provides a huge Soviet/Warsaw Pact inventory of relatively less effective, man-intensive weaponry ripe for retirement.
- ° The Soviet economy is not responding to perestroika, forcing Gorbachev to examine unproductive sectors of the Soviet economy for cuts/transfers.
- ° Perestroika will create unprecedented demands for skilled Slavic technicians coincident with a declining manpower pool.
- ° Gorbachev's public relations blitz seeks to portray a less threatening, more accommodating, civilianized Soviet Union.
- ° The recent INF agreement and publicity regarding possible 50 percent cuts in strategic arms have led to heightened expectations among the Western public that further conventional cuts are in the offering.
- ° Western (particularly US) economies would be considerably improved at this time by reduced defense expenditures. [redacted]

25X1

CL BY Signer
DECL OADR

SECRET [redacted]

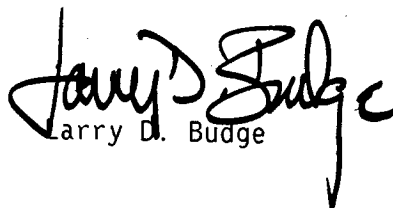
25X1

2. The foregoing circumstances appear to offer the Soviet leadership a significant opportunity to take the initiative in conventional arms control with little apparent cost. Deep cuts in old equipment provide some immediate returns in operations and maintenance funds and skilled manpower which could be transferred to more productive economic sectors. Offers of, or actual, deep conventional arms cuts might place a transitional US administration in a position where hasty responses could erode the conventional imbalance even further in the Soviets' favor, particularly in Central Europe, and no response would further erode the US image in world opinion. A SNIE outlining possible Soviet initiatives, their effect on Soviet warfighting capability, and probable allied reaction to these initiatives would enable US policymakers to draw up and coordinate in advance with allies alternative responses to a range of major actions by the Soviets in conventional arms control. An alternative format might be a typescript coordinated within the NIC rather than the Intelligence Community. Draft Key Questions and Terms of Reference are attached. [redacted]

25X1

3. Would appreciate any comments or suggestions which you might have to include feasibility, format, and possible drafters. [redacted]

25X1


Larry D. Budge

Attachment:
As Stated

SECRET [redacted]

25X1

Page Denied

Next 2 Page(s) In Document Denied